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WAR FOOD ADMINISTRATION
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Marketing Reports Division
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HIGHLIGHTS FROM MARKET NEWS REVIEWS

Week ending June 23, 1944

WEATHER:

Except for the usual summer showers in the mountain states and the Pacific Northwest, and dry weather in the Pacific Southwest, the weather has been relatively moderate and quiet during the past week in the Western Region area. In some localities the usual warm summer temperatures have not yet put in their appearance and the season is somewhat later than usual, especially the upper section of the San Joaquin Valley, California. The interior valleys and the San Francisco Bay area were surprised by several localized electrical storms and considerable rain late Friday afternoon. Light damage to crops was reported. The storms extended from Oregon southward to Fresno, California.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES:

Onions - Indications are that the North Texas onion deal may be completed this week. Fob sales there have improved during the week and demand has strengthened. The Texas fob price at the close of the week was \$1.50 per 50 pound bag of Yellow Bermudas and during the week as high as \$2.50 per 50 pound bag was paid for Crystal White Wax onions. Western wholesale markets have improved, both as to price and demand. Increases in prices averaged up to 30 cents per bag.

Potatoes - The fob market on Long White potatoes has continued to strengthen during the week, with fewer cars being sold the Government from the Western Region. Prices fob Wasco and Shafter in Kern County, California moved up to a range of \$2.40 to \$2.50 per hundred for U.S. 1 As with a good demand for U.S. 1 and Commercial. Wholesale markets in the West show a range in price for U.S. 1 of \$2.75 to \$3.55 per hundred, with a slightly stronger demand. Shipments this season, to date total 19778 cars from the Kern County area, compared with 17430 for the same period last year and a 1943 full season total of 19077 cars. Tulare, Fresno and Madera Counties, California are well advanced in digging and shipping operations, and the Stockton area is soon to start.

Apricots - Carload shipments of apricots out of California points now total 436 for this season since May first, compared with 207 cars last year. On the Eastern auction markets, prices on Royal "cots" ranged from \$2.85 to \$3.75 per lug.

Cherries - California, Idaho, Oregon and Washington have been shipping cherries this past week at an average of 30 cars daily. Top price on the New York auction this week for Bings was \$5.51 and on Royal Annes was \$5.40 per lug of 19 pounds.

Peaches - California has shipped out six cars of peaches this season since May first, compared with seven at this time last year. The U.S. total this year is 1166 cars, out of which 1137 have originated from Georgia. On the Western wholesale markets, Red Birds and Alexanders have sold mostly at 8 to 14 cents per pound.

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GRAIN PRODUCTS:

Wheat - Further surveys of the winter and spring wheat areas indicate that damage from stem rust is not heavy and is considerably spotted in the areas attacked. In general, good yields of both crops are expected. In the Canadian prairie sections the crop conditions are good for spring wheat. In the Pacific Northwest rains have been beneficial and the winter wheat is now approaching maturity. Recent wheat prices have been slightly lower.

Corn - No. 3 yellow corn has sold this past week in Chicago at the ceiling level of \$1.15 per bushel, which is 9 percent above the ceiling level in effect a year ago. The June average for the previous 10 years was 70 and five-eighths cents per bushel. Other grains, such as barley and oats, have also remained at ceiling with demand pushing that level. California barley being the exception which has declined.

Pastures - In the mountain states, moisture conditions have been very good during the last few weeks, resulting in good pasture growth. In the mountain valleys of the Pacific slope, relatively favorable pasture conditions have been maintained by frequent spring showers.

DAIRY AND POULTRY:

Eggs - Purchases by Governmental agencies, increased prices to both producers and the wholesalers, and decreased supplies characterized this week on the egg markets of the Pacific Coast. Wholesale prices to retailers advanced from one to two cents, with San Francisco topping the Coast at 41½ cents per dozen for large grade A eggs, and Portland low at 36 cents per dozen on Friday. Eastern markets have also firmed up as the result of lessened quantities moving in from production centers. Production is still heavy and small sizes and undergrades continue to drag.

Butter - For the week ending June 15, butter production on the Pacific Coast was 1 percent above the previous week but still 6 percent under that for the same week in 1943. Civilian demand has not been as heavy as was expected when ration points were removed from meats. This is considered to be in part the result of rumors that meat rationing will again be in effect. Consumers appear to be weighing the relative value of the use of red points on butter and steaks. Production for the United States for the week ending June 15 was 43,400,000 pounds, about 10 percent below production for the same period last year.

Poultry - Live and dressed poultry receipts were reported as being heavy this past week. Good stock moved readily, but low grades were refused. Dealers on the San Francisco markets appear to be withholding purchases for future use because of a one-cent reduction in the ceiling price effective next week. Prices paid producers ranged upward from 16 cents on light fowl to as much as 32 cents. Fob prices closed the week at 30 to 32 cents for fryers.

LIVESTOCK AND MEATS:

Hogs - The spring pig crop for December 1943 to June 1944 is estimated by the BAE to be 55,925,000 head, a reduction of 24 percent from 1942-1943. The heaviest reduction was in the Western region, which has reported a 37 percent cut. It is expected this will materially affect the feed situation and possibly bring the present feed supplies more in line with requirements for the balance of the season.

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Carry-over in the twelve principal markets has been relatively light this week, and pressure to sell has definitely let up in much of the surrounding area. The number of hogs marketed in the 12 markets this week totaled 470,100 head, compared with 489,306 head for the week previous. Prices in the Western region were reported as reaching a top of \$15.00 during the week in San Francisco, \$15.25 in Los Angeles and \$13.75 in Portland, for support-weight hogs.

Cattle - Grass fat steers in Western region markets increased in price slightly during the week, and grain fed steers also increased as much as 15 cents per cwt. Top prices on the Pacific Coast markets were at North Portland, where as much as \$17.00 was paid for choice fed and \$14.50 for grass fat steers. All these markets indicated increases in receipts, as did the 12 principal markets where 189,500 head were received this last week compared with 178,527 head for the week previous and 115,663 head for the same period last year.

Sheep - Offerings and receipts of sheep on Pacific Coast markets appeared to be in contrast to the Eastern markets in that they brought slightly higher prices than the week previous. Receipts were heavier in the Northwest and San Francisco markets, but somewhat lighter in Los Angeles. The three Pacific Coast markets show receipts this past week totaling 16,800 head, compared with 17,200 for the week previous and 15,900 head for the same period last year. To these amounts Utah adds 38,500, 31,200 and 38,300 head, respectively. In the twelve principal Midwestern markets a total of 226,300 head were received, which is 3,200 head above the previous week and 49 percent above the same period last year. Good to choice 88 to 92 pound lambs returned a top range of \$14.75 to \$15.75 on Western region markets.

Wools - Above-normal rains in much of the sheep raising areas of the "Territory" wool states have interfered with shearing, and yields of the Territory wools this year, although shrinkage of these coming from Idaho and Utah is less than last year.

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